

WASHINGTON D.C. - Representative Xavier Becerra (CA - 31), chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus's (CHC) Telecommunications and Technology Task Force, was joined by his CHC colleagues at a meeting this morning where Comcast Cable announced that it has signed a distribution agreement with the Sí TV Network, which officially launches February 25, 2004.

Founded in 1997, Sí TV is an industry leader in English-language Latino themed television programming, producing various shows for cable channels like Nickelodeon and Showtime. When it launches in February, the English language Latino themed Sí TV Network will feature culturally relevant programming that targets the growing young Latino and multi-cultural television audience, specifically focusing on Latinos between the ages of 18-34.

"This partnership is the beginning of what I believe will be a growing trend where television programmers and advertisers will recognize the influence and purchasing power of our nation's largest minority and devote the time and resources necessary to achieve parity with the Latino demographic," Rep. Becerra said.

Thirty-eight million people strong, Latinos are the largest minority group in the United States according to 2000 Census figures. And though this number represents over 13 percent of the nation's total population, there remains a dramatic divide between advertising dollars targeting Latinos. In fact, over the past three years, America's leading advertisers allocated an average of only 2.4 percent of their measured media advertising resources toward the Latino market. The partnership between Comcast and Sí TV has the potential to increase this share.

Comcast Cable serves more than 21 million customers in 17 of the nation's 20 largest metropolitan markets. "Comcast is committed to respecting and reflecting the customers, communities and cultures we serve," Comcast Cable president, Steve Burke, said in a statement to the CHC. "Sí TV will bring valuable and innovative programming to our customers, and we're looking forward to extending our relationship with them."

"I applaud Sí TV for its innovative exploration into a new, inventive programming format, and I praise Comcast Cable for recognizing the power of the Latino market and taking this much-needed first big step," Rep. Becerra said.